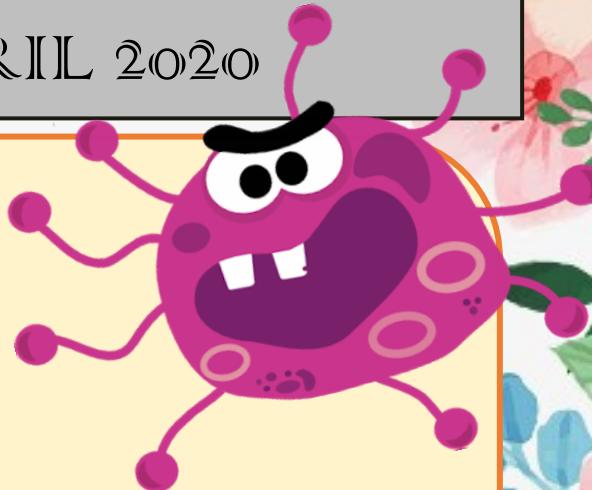




# Specialist Teaching and Learning Service

Ashford District

## Newsletter APRIL 2020



What a difficult time it is for us all! You are all in our thoughts. We have emailed you with the focus of our support for the next few weeks. This term there are 3 key things that I will ask teachers to prioritise :

**1: Remote support weekly for schools (Phone triage advice around provision and specific case support to schools and settings)**

**2: Transition planning for vulnerable pupils moving from EYs settings into schools and Primary into Secondary school** (the event planned for 23.4.20 is cancelled but teachers will be supporting transition via Zoom meetings and specific targeted work)

**3: An extraordinary LIFT to be held on 5th and 6th of May specifically related to the COVID 19 outbreak (details to follow)**

As stated in my previous email I am more than happy to be contacted on the school line or my mobile if anyone has any planning issues regarding providing provision for vulnerable groups.

We will also continue with previous offers as stated in last terms email;

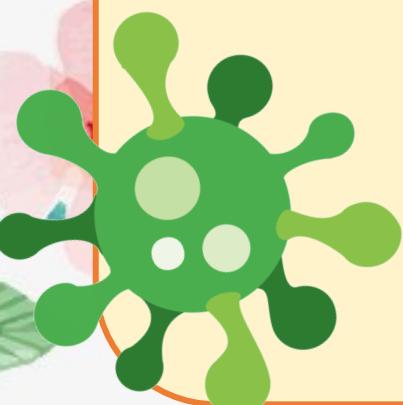
- Parental support-phone support for vulnerable parents who may be supporting pupils open to STLS at home. (This can be counted as part of the schools response to distance supporting pupils— please let me know if you have an specific pupils you would like this support for).
- Materials to support vulnerable children - social stories, resources etc. This shared via 2 newsletters that will come out this term the first looking at supporting pupils in the current climate and the second focussed on Transition to be circulated at the latter end of this term. Resources will also be uploaded to our website. [Www.ashfordinclusion.org](http://www.ashfordinclusion.org)

There is so much in terms of advice and resources out there and we are consulting with national researched approaches and sharing advice regularly via our website, this letter contains some of the highlights.

We are also busy working alongside KEPS and other multiagency partners regarding what a return would look like and what our young people will need. As this information is planned I will share it with you directly.

As ever education has risen to the challenge, and proved what amazing child centred profession we are, the work that schools are doing goes far beyond education and is making a significant difference to the young people we serve. It is an absolute pleasure to work alongside you all!

*Kerry Greene*





## Supporting the most vulnerable children and young people

A guide to supporting vulnerable pupils and students during periods of disruption



**Anna Freud**  
National Centre for  
Children and Families

## Supporting the Most Vulnerable Children and Young People by Anna Freud

This Interactive PDF Document contains:

- **Modeling Calm**
- **The importance of a safe environment**
- **Three practical steps**
- **Resources**

<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11322/supporting-the-most-vulnerable-children-and-young-people-interactive-160420.pdf>

## Supporting those with Autism during COVID-19

The National Autistic Society has provided information to help autistic people and their families through this unprecedented period of change and disruption. The link below takes you to the latest guidance from the NAS around coronavirus and useful resources and tips that can be shared with parents and young people.



**National  
Autistic  
Society**

**National Autistic Society Covid resources.**

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/resources.aspx>

A lot of parents have been telling us of their anxiety in trying to motivate children to come off screens and complete schools work.

Please follow the link below for some excellent research advice:

**Teens, screens and quarantines: What can research tell us?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCbwckymJil#action=share>



# Support for Parents during the COVID19

Three key messages of advice to support wellbeing and reduce anxiety. This helps to build children's resilience.

1

Reduce the amount of daily news the children seeing and hearing which negative messages.

2

Model resilience by your own statements. Make a positive statement at the end of every discussion about Covid19. For example, 'I will wash my hands every time I go to the toilet, this will keep me safe'.

3

Don't try to give certainty because sadly one of the key messages they are absorbing is 'Adults around me might die'. But do give a strong key message that most people will be fine and show them the positive stories in the press about recovery.

General advice: Keep using key messages. Key messages could possibly be : 1. Wash my hands 2. Most people will be fine 3. A learning message to keep your brain learning a bit every day. Whether that's cooking or going for a walk think about how to develop some learning at that time.

## Supporting Early Years during the Coronavirus Lockdown

For children who have been attending Nursery or Pre-school, up to 30 hours a week...

'Stay At Home – Stay Safe' is a very different way of life! But it has given us the chance to remind parents, and ourselves, about how much learning we can enjoy with our children at home. No need for workbooks or phonics schemes to avoid 'falling behind'! Just an understanding of the Characteristics of Effective Learning (free posters available from sites like <https://tpet.co.uk/downloads/characteristics-of-effective-learning-posters/>)

and the joy of sharing play.



For all children, but particularly those with SEND, routines are really helpful.

Here is a website which is built around a daily timetable, has many activities using household resources, and contains other valuable links for further support (including one for Dad's!)

<https://www.eyfshome.com>

And for a more detailed focus on Language and Communication Difficulties, there is plenty of parent-friendly advice at Tiny Happy People <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

It even has some Nursery Rhymes for when our grown-up voices have reduced to a growl!

Also, SpeechLink have opened a parent page, to which they will be adding useful activities now, and beyond the lockdown period <https://speechandlanguage.info/parents>

Remember, STLS are still available to offer advice on specific needs, and for serious new concerns, refer to our temporary virtual EY LIFT groups.

# Support for Parents during the COVID19

## Regression in the Time of Coronavirus

Why children take steps backwards in their development in times of stress.

### Responding to regression: What not to do

**Shame** your child for acting like “a baby.” Shaming has a profound, negative effect on children. It is an attack on their sense-of-self which leads to more acting-out behaviour. It also makes it much less likely they will rebound to a higher level of functioning.

Cajole, bribe, reward or punish your child to get her to “act her age.” These strategies tend to backfire for several reasons:

- When children sense that you are trying to control them, it often leads to power struggles that only result in their digging in their heels more forcefully.
- Your child is not regressing on purpose. She is acting on her feelings; so, using logic and trying to convince her to “get with it” rarely works and can in fact reinforce her regression.

Regression is often an unconscious way to elicit the additional support and reassurance children need when they are experiencing stress. When you demand that your child act more independently—to use the toilet, to be less clingy, etc.—it increases her insecurity which only leads to more regression.

### Responding to regression: What to do

Validate your child’s experience. Because we love our kids so deeply, it is hard to see them struggle. We just want to make the “bad” feelings go away because we think it’s harmful to them to feel sad, angry, or scared. But ignoring or minimizing feelings doesn’t make them magically disappear, they just get “acted-out” through behaviours—like aggression and regression—that can lead to more, not less, stress for your child ... and you.

So, start by acknowledging that your world has changed a lot over the past few weeks, and that change can be hard. Share that you are also adapting, and that you are all in this together.

Avoid the temptation to jump to reassurance that all will be well when your child expresses difficult emotions. If he says he misses his teachers and friends, instead of responding, “Don’t worry, you’ll see them again soon!”, start by validating his experience: “That makes a lot of sense. You love your school friends and teachers. It’s hard not to be able to play with them.”

Then move to empowerment, for example, by brainstorming ways your child can stay connected to teachers and friends by scheduling video chats, or drawing a picture or dictating an email to send to people he is missing. If you skip the step of validation before providing reassurance or going into problem-solving mode, it doesn’t give your child the chance to work through the feelings that are driving his behaviour.

When your child shares his deepest feelings with you, it is a gift. It means he trusts you. It also gives you the chance to help him cope with his emotions—one of your most important responsibilities as a parent. So, when your child tells you what’s on his mind and in his heart, tell him how happy you are that he is sharing his thoughts and feelings with you to reinforce that you will always be there for him and can handle whatever he is experiencing.

When you recognize and validate your child’s feelings, you let him know that he is not alone and that you understand and accept him completely. This helps your child gain the self-acceptance and self-awareness he will need to recognize, own and manage his feelings effectively, far into the future.

# NHS 'Living Our Values' Award



For the second year, a member of our fabulous Integrated Therapy Team at the Rainbow Centre has received the prestigious **NHS 'Living Our Values' Award**.

Last year the award was presented to Helen Stevens (Speech and Language Therapist). This year the winner is Sonia Sivyer (Team Leader, Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist).

Thank you to both of these hard-working, respected and highly-valued staff, advocates of collaborative working and integral to the support available for our children in Ashford District.



## Call Scotland—iPad/Tablet Apps

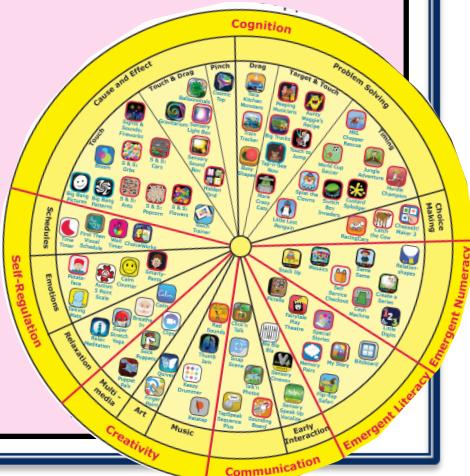
### iPads and Tablets - addictive barrier or enhanced access to learning?

EY SENCO Forum recently looked at a range of apps that increase children's access to learning or provide information for parents. We felt that these devices easily get over-used as pacifiers or rewards but are underused as support for language difficulties and other special educational needs.

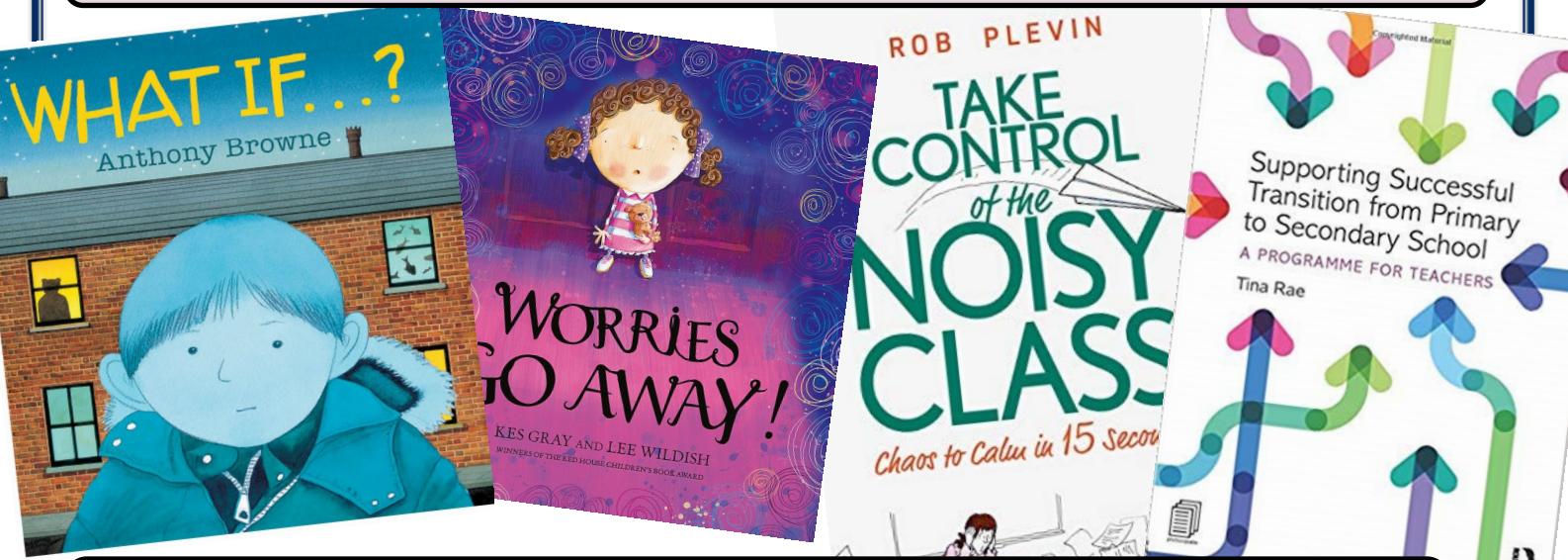
A guide is now being produced, in collaboration with our Integrated Therapy service, and will be available in Term 5. But in the meantime, do ask yourselves if you are making full use of your devices. Based on children's needs known through Primary and Secondary LIFT, we would expect at least 2-3 children in most Ashford District classes to be using Clicker on an iPad, most days.

In the meantime, the website below has been a leading guide in the use of apps for some years and is well worth exploring:

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets/>



# Book Resource Bank



## UPCOMING TRAINING

Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus we have cancelled all training courses for the next 4 weeks  
(19th May 2020).

Apologies for any inconvenience caused but I am sure you will appreciate that due to the circumstances this has been the best decision.

[www.ashfordinclusion.org](http://www.ashfordinclusion.org)

Have you seen our new website???